



## Retreat-In-Place: Unwind from Anxiety and Re-Center on Christ

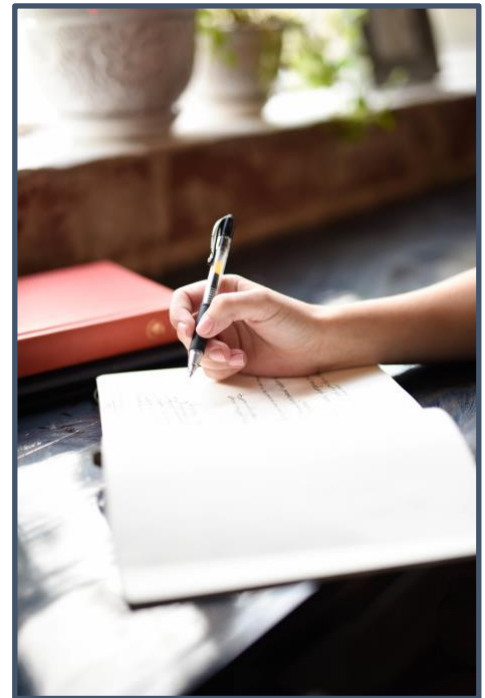
### ◆ Opening Reflection ◆ (10-60 minutes)

The purpose of this activity is to help you identify how you are as you begin this retreat, and what you long for.

Would you like to explore and express this through words or images, or both?

#### Option 1: Words

- What you will need:
  - Journal or paper for writing on
  - Pen or pencil
- Part 1: Check in with yourself. How have you been feeling lately? What has been on your mind or heart lately? Write your responses, either creating a bullet-point list or a long, rambling description of each piece of what you uncover, or anything in between. You might even consider writing this down as in a letter to God, beginning with “Dear God,” “Dear Jesus,” “Dear Creator,” or another name for The Divine.
- Part 2: Continue checking in with yourself. What do you long for right now? Try not to sort for the “best” answer or “right” answer, but write down what first comes to your mind. Then think about whether there is another longing underneath this one—something deeper that you usually don’t acknowledge—or whether there are additional longings in your heart right now. Write these down, too.



- Trust that God hears you and knows you through what you express in this way, and that your process of journaling has been a prayer.

### Option 2: Images

- What you will need:
  - Piece of paper for drawing on
  - Colored pencils, markers, or other drawing tools
- Fold a piece of paper in half, in any direction.
- Part 1: Check in with yourself. How have you been feeling lately? What has been on your mind or heart lately? Draw in response to these prompts on one half of your paper. Your drawing can be as photographic/concrete or as abstract as you'd like. You don't have to explain your artwork to anyone.
- Part 2: Continue checking in with yourself. What do you long for right now? Try not to sort for the "best" answer or "right" answer, but draw what first comes to your mind in the other half of your paper. Then think about whether there is another longing underneath this one—something deeper that you usually don't acknowledge—or whether there are additional longings in your heart right now. Draw these, too, in the same half. Again, be as concrete or abstract as you'd like.
- Trust that God sees you and knows you through what you express in this way, and that your process of drawing has been a prayer.

